

Hadley Skeffington-Vos called a meeting of the Sterling Tree Board to order at 10:04 a.m. on Thursday, February 7th, 2013. Roll Call. Present: Larry McCormick, Doug Jacobs, Pete Dillon, Rick Powers, and Alan Skoog.

Hadley welcomed everyone back after a "winter break." She passed around brochures on the February 19th EAB seminar at Sauk Valley Community College. So far, Doug will be attending. Hadley will be on vacation and will be unable to attend. Hadley updated the Board on the EAB seminar in DeKalb a few weeks ago.

Hadley updated the Board on discussions among City staff and the Mayor on a 50/50 and 80/20 tree program. The 50/50 program would be a tree parkway planting program. Residents and the City would split the cost of planting a new tree in the parkway. It would not apply to ash tree removal/replacement. The City would contract out the work to the best bidder. The City is budgeting for 10 tree plantings a year. The 80/20 program is the idea of the Mayor. It is a program to remove and replace trees that are on private property and cause a hazard to the public. Instead of informing residents that they need to remove a hazardous tree on private property with no assistance from the City, the City would have an 80/20 program to assist residents. Both programs are still being worked on. Alan brought up issues with prevailing wage and how that could affect costs. He will have updates on prevailing wage for tree work after a Friday legislative meeting.

Hadley and Rick also updated the Board on the City's new initiative to plant street trees while replacing/repaving roads in the City. As the city digs up streets and sidewalks for replacement, Rick will determine where it is appropriate to plant trees. The City is also budgeting 24K a year for EAB tree removal/replacement.

As for Tree City USA, Hadley submitted the application in December. She has sent emails to DNR but received no response yet. Last year, February was when Sterling was notified they didn't receive status. Hadley sees no reason why the City wouldn't get recognition/designation this year. She will try contacting DNR again this week.

The Tree Board went over their goals from last year and proposed goals for this year, 2013. Larry suggested adding a commercial recycling promotion goal. Pete suggested Christmas tree mulching by the City, with mulch then being available for free to residents. Currently, Allied Waste has a 2 week pickup window for Christmas trees and drops them off in the landfill. Rick will look into that for the 13/14 holiday season. A poster contest was removed from the list. If the Board needs or wants to do that in the future, we can add it back in. It might be something more for schools or the newspaper to do instead. The DNR hasn't done a poster contest in a few years.

Pete brought up the hanging planters for downtown. It is a Main Street and STI initiative. Hadley had not heard anything about that. Rick questioned watering solutions for those hanging planters. Hadley will inquire with Main Street about the progress of that project.

Hadley updated the Tree Board on the City's downtown planters and the plan to budget for irrigation systems in the planters. The past few years have been hard on the planters and the City continually lose plants. Last year, PW had a full time staff person dedicated to watering City properties. Despite that, we still lost plants. Granted last year was a very bad drought.

The board went over plans for 2013 Arbor Day- on Friday April 26th. They plan to have a radio broadcast with some members to discuss Arbor Day importance and Tree Board projects/initiatives. Hadley will look into getting a spot on the high school's television interview program. Someone will also be designated to write a letter to the editor of the newspaper about Arbor Day and EAB and other tree issues. Then Hadley will contact Challand and Jefferson schools to see if the Tree Board could plant 5 trees along the sidewalks there, since there is no available shade for that long stretch between/around the schools. Only a few kids from the school, like class presidents or honor roll or student of the months would be invited to participate. Hopefully the Mayor will be available for a dedication ceremony.

The Tree Board went over the Dept. of Ag's map of EAB traps in Sterling. Questions asked of how often they're checked and how they work. Hadley mentioned that the Dept. of Ag representative in DeKalb was very helpful and offered to come to Sterling to do any presentation or informative session as needed.

The information for the Dept. of Ag contact is as follows:

Scott Schirmer
Plant & Pesticide Specialist Supervisor
Emerald Ash Borer Program Manager
Illinois Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Environmental Programs
2280 Bethany Rd. Ste. B
DeKalb, IL 60115
815-787-5476 (office)
708-638-9562 (cell)

Dillon inquired to the health of trees around City Hall and downtown and plans for removal/replacement? Rick will look into that.

Hadley brought up the City's annual Clean and Green on Friday May 17th and Saturday May 18th. She will work with Self Help to incorporate their electronic recycling with the Clean and Green. She will look up info on the County's and Township's efforts and

programs. Volunteers are being recruited now and information will soon be on website and Channel 11 and presented to Council. Hadley encouraged the Tree Board to attend and help out. It runs all day both days. There is also waste drop off at PW.

With no other business to be discussed, the meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m. Next meeting will be scheduled for some time in March at the City Hall Annex. Hadley will send out a notice for that meeting.

Hadley Skeffington-Vos
Assistant to the City Manager